

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
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R 032104Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5059
INFO AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

C O N F I D E N T I A L GUATEMALA 1386

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, PINT, ES, GT
SUBJ: HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY

REF: GUATEMALA 1135

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. EDITORIAL MARCH 2 IN LIBERAL MORNING
DAILY EL GRAFICO, WRITTEN BY EDITOR JORGE CARPIO NICOLLE,
BROTHER OF CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC CONGRESSMAN ROBERTO CARPIO,
DEMONSTRATES CONTINUING GUATEMALAN INTEREST IN EVOLVING
HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY OF CARTER ADMINISTRATION. IN EDITORIAL
ENTITLED "CARTER FULFILLS HIS PROMISE", CARPIO WRITES,
"HUMAN RIGHTS HAVE BECOME AN 'OBSESSIVE PASSION' FOR THE
GOVERNMENT OF PRESIDENT CARTER". AFTER REVIEWING THE
ADMINISTRATION'S ACTIONS ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN EASTERN EUROPE
AND AFRICA, CARPIO TURNS TO LATIN AMERICA AND NOTES THE
REDUCTION IN MILITARY AID TO ARGENTINA AND THE RESULTING
CHILL IN US-ARGENTINE BILATERAL RELATIONS. HE THEN ASKS
WHAT THE WASHINGTON ATTITUDE WILL BE TOWARD THE
SALVADORAN ELECTIONS. "WILL IT (THE US) REACT TO THE
FRAUD WHICH IT IS SAID HAS BEEN COMMITTED AND TO THE
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SUBSEQUENT REPRESSION OF THE OPPOSITION DEMONSTRATIONS?
OR WILL IT OVERLOOK THE VIOLENT EVENTS THAT HAVE
HAPPENED IN SALVADOR? WILL IT PUNISH THE SALVADORAN
GOVERNMENT BY ENDING CREDITS AND WITHDRAW ITS MILITARY
SUPPORT, AS IT IS DOING IN ARGENTINA, OR WILL IT TURN
ITS BACK ON THE EXISTING SITUATION IN THAT COUNTRY? WHO
KNOWS. BUT WHAT ONE CAN STATE IS THAT WHAT CARTER SAID,

WHAT HE PROMISED IN HIS ELECTION CAMPAIGN, HE IS FULFILLING TO THE LETTER, REGARDLESS OF WHERE THE HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS ARE OCCURING. HIS POLICY IS MORAL, BUT AT THE SAME TIME DANGEROUS. WHERE IT WILL LEAD IS UNKNOWN." END UNCLASSIFIED.

2. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL. COMMENT: IN THIS AS IN ALL OTHER PUBLIC COMMENT WE HAVE SEEN IN GUATEMALA, NO ONE HAS GOTTEN UP THE COURAGE TO ADVOCATE US SANCTIONS, OR EVEN CRITICISM, AGAINST EL SALVADOR. (FUR LEADER MANUEL COLOM DID TELL EMBOFF PRIVATELY THAT US SHOULD SHARPLY REDUCE OR ABOLISH MILITARY AID TO SALVADOR, BECAUSE THAT WOULD FORCE SALVADORAN MILITARY TO HOLD NEW ELECTIONS.) ON THE ONE HAND MANY CIVILIANS IN GUATEMALA (CERTAINLY NOT THE MILITARY, OR THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY) WOULD BE PLEASED TO SEE US SANCTIONS IN SALVADOR AS AN INCENTIVE TO GUATEMALAN AUTHORITIES TO PERMIT HONEST ELECTIONS HERE IN MARCH 1978. BUT ON OTHER HAND, SHOULD AID BE CUT, THERE WOULD BE STRONG PUBLIC CRITICISM FROM MANY OF THE SAME CIVILIAN LEADERS AGAINST US "INTERVENTION" IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF SALVADOR.

BOSTER

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